

MISSION AIR SCHOOL WELCOMES WARREN DOONEY

I had the distinct pleasure of dining with Warren Dooney at *Hanger Five Restaurant*, Columbus Municipal Airport today. Imagine disembarking after a series of lengthy flights and multiple time zone changes, experiencing scorching heat for the first time, only to be asked if he would be willing to be interviewed for a newspaper article. Remarkably, his answer was in the affirmative!

Warren, along with his parents and two older sisters, grew up on a dairy farm in Pukekohe (Poo-Key-Koe-Hee), North Island, New Zealand. After graduating from Pukekohe High School, he studied electrical engineering and is now a contract engineer for BCS Group in Auckland, a company that specializes in airport logistics.

Mr. Dooney had an interest in aviation and attained his private pilot's license at age twenty. "I flew for about five years, but had to set aside flying for a time due to family responsibilities. I renewed my license in 2000, but had to stop flying several years later due to the cost," states Warren. In 2002, he joined New Zealand's Auckland Coast Guard Air Patrol.

Most interestingly, New Zealand's Coast Guard Air Patrol is a charity organization. The vast majority of financial support comes from private donations, " ...with only a very small percentage from the government to run the boats and the aircraft," states Mr. Dooney. "Aircraft are ready to fly from 8 AM to sunset every weekend and public holiday." If you serve as a volunteer, there are no membership dues. However, if you want to join without any intention of volunteering your time and skills, there is an annual cost. "What the boaties do is similar to your automobile association," explains Warren. They join the Coast Guard for \$ 97 per year, so if the boat breaks down, the Coast Guard will help out." The program does not provide pilot training nor is there a cadet program.

Warren joined the Auckland Coast Guard Air Patrol, one of four regional units, in 2002. Initially, he served as our equivalent of a Mission Scanner (called Mission Observer in New Zealand) for Auckland Coast Guard Air Patrol. As of January 2012, he has advanced from back seat to right front seat, acting as an In-Flight Coordinator. This position is similar to that of CAP's Mission Observer.

So, how did this New Zealander end up in America's Heartland? It just so happens that he was awarded the 2011 Regional Air Patrol Person of the Year. Shortly after, the prestigious 2011 National Air Patrol Person of the Year was presented to Warren. He has come to NESAs's Mission Air School, all expenses paid, to learn about our nation's Civil Air Patrol. Armed with this knowledge, Mr. Dooney will return to his homeland and serve as the Unit Training Officer.

Mr. Dooney lives with his wife Sharon and their daughter Emma (21) in Kaukapakapa (cow-copper-copper), a small town about one-half hour northwest of Auckland. Megan, their older daughter is married. The family owns two cats, Lilly and Ron, as well as a dog named Shayla. They also own seven sheep. When this writer asked if the sheep served as a food supply, this was Warren's reply:

"I've certainly buried a few [sheep], but I don't eat them!"

